
RIGHT FROM THE START MEDICAID (RSM) OUTREACH PROJECT

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The RSM Outreach Project is funded through a contractual agreement between Georgia's Department of Human Services and Department of Community Health. The Project began in July 1993 as a response to Georgia's high infant mortality rate and to provide a medical safety net for Georgia's needy families. This endeavor also was created to address the need to improve health care access for all children and pregnant women.

Initially, the RSM Outreach Project provided Medicaid coverage for pregnant women and children under the age of 19. Income limits are higher than those of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Low Income Medicaid (LIM) and the Medically Needy programs. The application process is fast and easy. There are no asset tests. Needy families may be eligible even if both parents live in the home or if other insurance coverage is in place.

The RSM Outreach Project manages its own Toll Free 800 line (1-800-809-7276). The RSM staff provide information and referrals to customers for all services administered by DFCS including Medicaid, SNAP, Childcare, TANF, Child Welfare, etc. The staff also provide information regarding Child Support Services, Social Security, SSI and other community resources.

The RSM Outreach Project works directly with the Peachcare for Kids Program (Georgia's Child Health Insurance Program- CHIP). This program was designed for working, self-supporting Georgia families who cannot afford private insurance and are ineligible for Medicaid. The RSM Outreach staff help enroll Peachcare eligible children and spread the word about available services to healthcare providers statewide.

Through exclusive partnership with Public Health, the RSM Outreach Project administers the Women's Health Medicaid program. This class of assistance provides Medicaid for women in active treatment for breast and/or cervical cancer. For the past ten years, RSM Outreach Project staff have been responsible for the intake and ongoing case maintenance as well as yearly reviews for all Women's Health Medicaid cases.

The RSM Outreach Project continues to expand its reach to Georgia Families with the addition of the Long Term Care Nursing Home units, Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB) and the Katie Beckett Unit. Effective November 2010, participants in long term care living arrangements including nursing homes or those utilizing community care service providers, may now complete an application for ABD Medicaid services via an on-line application process. The RSM Outreach Project Long Term Care Unit is centrally located at 2 Peachtree in Atlanta, Georgia but provides statewide coverage. The staff have begun to receive and process long term care applications submitted online with an expected outcome of improved efficiency in application processing for families.

The Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB) Unit provides no cost family planning services to eligible women in Georgia. P4HB goals are to reduce incidences of low birth weight deliveries, high risk pregnancies and Medicaid cost by reducing the number of unintended pregnancies. This staff started accepting applications effective December 1, 2010. The P4HB unit is centrally located in Alma, GA but provides statewide coverage.

The RSM Outreach Project's Katie Beckett unit determines initial and ongoing eligibility for children up to age 19 who are eligible for institutionalized care but are receiving home-based care instead. This staff started accepting applications effective January 2, 2012. The Katie Beckett unit is centrally located in Norcross, GA but provides statewide coverage.

There are some major distinguishing features of the RSM Outreach Project: Conducting of Community Outreach events, Non-Traditional work hours and Non-DFCS work sites. Caseworkers and supervisory staff conduct presentations, workshops and special information sharing and application processing events regularly to community groups, daycare centers, job fairs, medical providers and employers. Since 1993, the RSM Outreach staff have conducted over 200,000 outreach presentations throughout Georgia. Caseworkers are required to work 8 non-traditional hours each week to increase accessibility to services. The staff are available outside the traditional Monday- Friday 9 to 5 office hours so that work, school and childcare arrangements do not present access barriers to services. The DHS/DCH contractual agreement stipulates that the RSM Outreach Project staff be out-stationed at worksites other than Title IV-A facilities which includes county DFCS offices. RSM staff are currently located in health departments, hospitals, clinics, schools, community action agencies and other locations frequented by pregnant women, children and other potential customers.

Staffing level for the RSM Outreach Project is similar in size to that of a large class 4 county DFCS office having a total of 231 allocated positions statewide. The RSM Outreach Project plays a pivotal role in honoring Georgia's commitment to improving the quality of life and health for children, pregnant women and needy families.